

Council on Educational Services for Exceptional Children
March 20, 2013
Meeting Minutes

Council Member Participants:

Brechbiel	Stephen
Diggs	Melvin
Ezzell	Mark
Garland	Curt
Harris-Floyd	Sharon
Humbert	Susan
Jimerson	Nicole
Madrone	Karen
Maxwell	Ann
McNeill	Caria
Naylor	Patricia
Scercy	Jill
Simmons	Vicki
Thomas	Sherry
Whitfield	Deborah
Williams	Judy

Other Participants:

Mixson Lyon	Linda
Monforti	Brenda
George	Leanna
Jimerson	Ari

Staff Participants:

Bynum	Tish
Elvey	Bill
Jarrett	Mary
Neale	Kate
Thomas	Sherry
Wolfe	Ira

Council Members Absent

Barefoot	Sen. Chad
Bostic	Cynthia
Hester	Melanie
Holland	Tammy
Holloway	Rep. Bryan
Kea	Cathy
Knapp	Sheila
LaCorte	Mary
Pharr	O. Martin
Phillips	Lisa
Plemmons	Jana

Welcome, Review of Agenda

Jill Scercy, Chairperson, called the meeting to order. Council members, staff and visitors provided introductions and their position/relationship to the Council.

Approval of Minutes

The Council reviewed the December 12, 2012, meeting minutes and suggested edits. The Council approved meeting minutes with edits.

Review of Bylaws

Chairperson Jill Scercy suggested the Council divide into four groups to review Section B-Functions of the Council. Each group reviewed and discussed an assigned function and recommended how the Council should proceed forward in performing the function.

B. Functions

Group 1 – *Advise the State Education Agency (SEA) of unmet needs within the State in the education of children with disabilities.*

Suggestions were:

- Subcommittee work between meetings to find out what are the unmet needs
- Determine the current method of obtaining/soliciting for unmet needs
- Present the unmet needs to the Council
- Subcommittee could request Council to brainstorm on topics/issues/concerns regarding possible unmet needs
- Attend SBE meetings
- Determine process of providing unmet needs to SBE
- Determine how the SBE currently operates its subcommittees; possibly Council members could meet with appropriate SBE subcommittees to present unmet needs

With new SBE members coming soon, the Council has an opportunity to set a precedence with the new SBE.

Group 2 – Comment publicly on any rules or regulations proposed by the State regarding the education of children with disabilities.

Suggestions were:

- Subcommittee to focus on SBE meetings and proposed rule/regulation changes
- Council members attend SBE meetings and report back to the Council
- Staff and Council member present together at SBE meeting
- Council's comments/recommendations submitted to the SBE by methods other than letter of recommendation (ie reports, presentations, etc.)

SBE meeting dates are posted on the web. SBE meetings are streamed live. [Globally Competitive Students (GCS) as the most common area for EC issues.]

Public comment period is outside regular SBE meetings. The Council may provide input as a group and as individuals during a public comment period.

Group 3 – Advise the SEA in developing evaluations and reporting on data to the Secretary of Education (US DOE) under section 618 of the Act, i.e. Program Information.

Suggestions were:

- Subcommittee on Section 618 to determine how to be active in advising on the development of evaluations prior to reporting to the US Dept. of Education
- Review data prior to submission to the US Dept. of Education
- Subcommittee to utilize Council relationships to put forth/share best practices to LEAs that need improvement
- Subcommittee could followup, interact and report back to the Council on low-performing LEAs' data collection process

Group 4 – two topics – 1) Advise the SEA in developing corrective action plans to address findings identified in Federal monitoring reports under Part B of the Act; and 2) Advise the SEA in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities.

Suggestions were:

- Subcommittee to determine exactly what items the Council can provide guidance and implementation suggestions
- Council reviews and advises on corrective action within the structure and time limitations
- Federal corrective actions may create very limited Council discretion
- Subcommittee for the State Performance Plan (SPP) / Annual Performance Report (APR) to clarify the Council's duties; with separate meetings and meeting minutes; reporting back to Council at each quarterly meeting. Possibly add SPP function to Bylaws

The SBE is constitutionally established, directs and controls NC education; DPI is the agent that executes SBE directives.

C. Membership - The addition of a general education representative to Council membership did not go through the SBE approval process. The EC Division will submit to SBE.

The Council also questioned the addition of a representative from the State parent Training and Information Center, Exceptional Children's Assistance Center, and wondered if the representative has participated in voting matters in the past.

The process of filling Council membership vacancies includes a submission to the SBE for appointment recommendations as well as providing appointment recommendations as needed. The SBE submission is first considered for discussion then action (minimum two month process).

D. Terms of Office

The Council reviewed members' term of office.

E. Procedures

1. The Council shall meet four times per year or as often as necessary to conduct its business. The Council agrees that quarterly meetings for the entire group is adequate with the option of subcommittees to meet as needed.
2. By September 1 of each year, the Council shall submit an annual report of Council activities and suggestions to the SEA. This report must be made available to the public in a manner consistent with other public reporting requirements of Part B of the IDEA 2004. Kate Neale prepares the annual report for posting on the website. The report includes a summary of discussions and letters of recommendations to the SBE. The Council suggested a one-pager with bullets of suggestions/needs and each subcommittee would have a final report that would be compiled into the final report for web posting.
3. Official minutes must be kept on all Council meetings and must be made available to the public on requires. Meeting minutes are posted to the web after Council's approval.
4. All Council meetings and agenda items must be announced enough in advance of the meeting to afford interested parties a reasonable opportunity to attend. Meetings must be open to the public. The Council suggested a subcommittee to create the agenda led by the chairperson. Other methods of attending, like teleconferencing, was suggested by the Council. Sherry Thomas will review the request and report back.
5. Interpreters and other necessary services must be provided at Council meetings for members or participants. The State may pay for the services from IDEA funds.

Interpreters are provided as needed.

The Council reviewed the remaining Procedures regarding service without compensation, meeting location and secretarial support.

F. Meeting Attendance

It was noted that legislative representatives may not be able to adhere to the attendance requirements. It was suggested that a subcommittee member could be assigned to keep the legislative representatives informed of Council activity.

It was suggested that Council members continue to provide prior notification if unable to attend. The Council may need to explore options to have a proxy vote. It was also suggested that if teleconferencing were available that members would be allowed limited usage of this option.

The Council agreed that the attendance policy should be enforced.

The Council suggested that new members receive an orientation, maybe half a day, in August prior to the September meeting. The orientation would informally cover duties and expectations of a Council member as well as a formal presentation.

G. Internal Orientation

The Council reviewed this section.

H. Officers

Consensus is that the Council wants subcommittees on various issues/topics of concerns. The next agenda will allot time to finalize subcommittees and make assignments. Volunteers will be accepted for the subcommittees. Any suggestions should be emailed to Chairperson Jill Scercy.

The Council suggested the following subcommittees:

- A. Administrative – items relating to internal administrative functions and operations, working on the work, creating the quarterly agenda
- B. Data and Reports – review and interpret all data
- C. Unmet Needs – determine process and obtain the unmet needs
- D. Communications – be aware of issues prior to public comment periods, handle public policy comment, gather Council's opinion, post all comments on website on an ongoing basis.
- E. SBE Relations – the Council wants a stronger relationship with the SBE and its members; assign members to provide Council representation and report back. The Council wants to be visible to the SBE and make the SBE aware of its functions.

All Council functions should be covered by subcommittees.

Occupational Course of Study (OCS) Task Force

Sherry Thomas, Assistant EC Director, announced that Beverly Colwell, Intellectual Disabilities and Secondary Education Consultant, now handles OCS. The EC Division had an internal re-organization and now EC curriculum and assessments are under the same section, Supporting Teaching and Related Services.

OCS courses are being aligned with the Standard Course of Study/Common Core standards. Currently, American History I and II are being aligned. The 2013 school year is the target implementation date. Other courses that have already been aligned are: Algebra 1, Biology 1, and Financial Management.

In 2010 and 2012, the SBE granted a waiver of the paid employment hours for OCS students. OCS students could apply their volunteer/unpaid hours toward the 360 hour competitive employment requirement. It did not eliminate the requirement entirely. Considering the increased curriculum rigor along with the work hour requirement, it could appear that OCS students are held to a much higher standard than the general education student population.

An OCS Task Force with representatives from across the state including teachers of OCS, EC Directors, transition coordinators, parents, vocational rehabilitation, career tech, national center on transition and representatives from large and small LEAs was formed to begin reviewing the work hours requirement. The task force will determine and weigh the pros and cons of the work requirement given that OCS courses now align with Standard Course of Study. A possible recommendation from the task force may be to reduce or eliminate the work hours requirement and/or possibly consolidate the Occupational Prep I-IV courses. The Council will be kept up to date on task force recommendations.

The Council requested to share with the task force that some LEAs left the responsibility of the work hours requirement up to the parents and students. The Council also recommended it was a good idea for the task force to come up with work hour guidelines for IEP teams as well as making sure parents are aware of the rigor within the OCS curriculum.

Private Residential Treatment Facilities (PRTFs)

Kate Neale, Dispute Resolution Consultant, informed the Council that there is not a currently existing Memorandum of Understanding between the Dept. of Public Instruction and Dept. of Health and Human Services as required by federal regulations. Under the licensing requirements, PRTFs are required to provide general education and special education to its students. DPI and DHHS attorneys have met to propose legislation to eliminate the confidentiality issues raised by DHHS.

Agency Update

Sherry Thomas, Interim Director/Assistant Director of the EC Division, provided the Council a current organizational chart of the EC Division staff and informed them that interviews were conducted for the Director position.

- Sequestration – there is a 5% cut for special education which equates to 16.7 million.
- The State's VI-B grant application is out for public notice. The public comment period is: March 21 – April 21, 2013.
- A PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Support) schools recognition occurred in February. In 2007/2008 there were 691 schools implementing PBIS. In 2011/2012 there were 1,186 schools. PBIS is rolling out a new data management system in April. The PBIS data will also be included in PowerSchool/HomeBase.

- There are four pilot sites across the state for the Content Literacy Continuum (CLC). Three RtI pilot sites use CLC as part of their base literacy interventions.
- Approximately 350 EC Directors attended the Division's EC Director Institute last week in Greensboro. A main topic was Measures of Student Learning out of the Race to the Top grant.
- The EC Division received a Transition to Teaching Grant that relates to teacher recruitment and retention. NC out recruited other states. The requirement was 18 and NC recruited 49 special education teachers in low income/high need counties.
- The Annual Census for Legally Blind and the Deaf Blind child count are currently being collected.
- There are now five teams on augmentative communication led by Division staff in the Sensory Support and Assistive Technology Section.
- The State Improvement Project (SIP) held its math/reading networking meeting on March 19 - 21.
- EC Division staff are working with general education curriculum staff on their summer institutes, such as understanding the Common Core.
- Governor's School will begin June 16. LEAs/students have received their acceptance/nonacceptance notification.
- EC Division Summer Institutes will mostly be the week of July 22 – 26 in Greensboro. This is a great opportunity for teachers to earn CEUs.
- The 63rd Annual Conference on Exceptional Children is November 20 – 22 in Greensboro.

Meeting adjourned.